

Message Text

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TAGS: ASEAN, EEC, EGEN

SUBJECT: SECOND SESSION OF ASEAN/EEC JOINT STUDY GROUP

1. THE ASEAN/EEC JOINT STUDY GROUP WHICH HELD ITS SECOND SESSION ON DECEMBER 2 TO 3, 1976 IN MANILA DISCUSSED AT LENGTH AN ASEAN PROPOSAL, APROPOS THE PROPOSED EEC TAX ON VEGETABLE OIL, "A SYSTEM OF PRIOR CONSULTATIONS ON MATTERS AFFECTING ASEAN INTERESTS AND DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORTS." AS A RESULT, THE SESSION'S REPORT WAS NOT COMPLETED AND WOULD BE WRITTEN IN BRUSSELS. THE MEETING, HOWEVER, PROVIDED FOR THE EEC TO PROCEED WITH A SEMINAR ON THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY FOR ASEAN PARTICIPANTS AS WELL AS A MAJOR CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS TO ATTRACT EEC PRIVATE INVESTMENTS TO THE ASEAN COUNTRIES. FINALLY, AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON TWO PILOT PROJECTS ON JOINT VENTURES IN THE TIMBER INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY.

2. THE ASEAN DELEGATION WAS LED BY ACTING DFA SECRETARY JOSE D. INGLES AND THE EEC DELEGATION BY DR. MANFRED CASPARI, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS. BESIDES PROPOSING "PRIOR CONSULTATIONS" IN HIS OPENING SPEECH, INGLES ALSO ASKED THAT THE EEC LIFT THE THREAT OF A BAN ON ASEAN TEXTILES AND EXPRESSED THE EXPECTATION THAT EEC "MEASURES APPLIED TO ASEAN WOULD BE NO LESS FAVORABLE THAN THOSE RECEIVED BY OTHER COUNTRIES AND

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REGIONAL GROUPS."

3. DR. CASPARI ASSURED THE ASEAN DELEGATES ON THE PROPOSED VEGETABLE TAX, SAYING THAT THE COUNCIL WILL TAKE UP THE QUESTION AND HE DOES NOT FORESEE A RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE NEXT YEAR. HE ANNOUNCED THAT THE EEC WOULD HOST A MAJOR CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS NEXT APRIL AND WOULD INVITE 100 ASEAN INDUSTRIALIST AND BUSINESSMEN TO MEET WITH THEIR EEC COUNTERPARTS ON PRIVATE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES. CURIOUSLY, HIS PROPOSAL READ AS A QUESTION, THAT IS, WHETHER ASEAN WOULD BE " WILLING TO OPEN ITS DOORS TO THE ENTREPRENEURIAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES WHICH EUROPE CAN PROVIDE." DR. CASPARI ALSO TOLD THE ASEAN DELEGATIONS THAT THE EEC, AS PART OF ITS EXPORT PROMOTION ASSISTANCE, WOULD BE SENDING TWO BUYING MISSIONS TO THE REGION NEXT YEAR.

4. THE FIRST SESSION OF THE ASEAN/EEC JOINT STUDY GROUP WAS HELD IN BRUSSELS IN JUNE 26 TO 27, 1975. BOTH SIDES FELT THAT THE PRESENT SESSION WAS EXTREMELY USEFUL AND THAT SESSIONS SHOULD BE HELD MORE FREQUENTLY, AND ACCORDINGLY THE THIRD MEETING HAS BEEN SET FOR JUNE OR JULY NEXT YEAR IN BRUSSELS.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO DISCUSS THE MEETING WITH THE COMMISSION DELEGATES WHO WERE HERE TOO BRIEFLY (AS GOP OFFICIALS ADMIT). GOP OFFICIALS HERE WERE SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED OVER THE VISITORS' REACTION WHEN THE VEGETABLE OIL TAX AND TEXTILE ISSUE WERE AIRED IN THE PRESS. OVERALL, THE MEETING MARKED A USEFUL GETTING-ACQUAINTED SESSION, AND BOTH SIDES SEEM TO BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER.
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